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ABSTRACT

In fall 1988, Mt. San Antonio College undertook a study to determine the effect of prerequisite waivers on students' academic progress. Two groups who received waivers in the fall 1987 and spring 1988 semesters were selected for the study. Group I included 222 students who applied for and received waivers both semesters. Group II was comprised of 122 students who used waivers to take classes other than English as prerequisites for English classes. The two groups were granted 847 waivers, including 381 in English, 238 in mathematics, and 210 in American language. Study findings included the following: (1) at the end of fall 1987, Group I had completed 67% of the classes they had attempted with a "C" or above, compared with the college-wide successful class completion rate of 56.6%; (2) in both fall 1987 and spring 1988, the highest number of course withdrawals were from math classes; (3) 68% of Group II successfully completed their English classes with a "C" grade or better both semesters; and (4) transcript analyses of the unsuccessful students in Group II showed a clear pattern of previous class withdrawals, low grades, academic probation, and dismissal. The results of the study clearly established waivers as an integral part of the matriculation process. The leading indicators of a student's ability to achieve success after being granted a waiver were previous grade point average, and withdrawal and course completion patterns. (AJL)

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WAIVER STUDY
FALL 1987 - SPRING 1988

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FOCUS STUDY

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ACKNOWLEDGES THE ASSISTANCE OF

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NOVEMBER, 1988

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Total Dean's Waivers Fall 1987 to Fall 1988 21

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

With the assistance of Joseph M. Zagorski, Vice President Instruction and Student Services, and Kathi Dieterle, Admissions and Records, a study was undertaken to determine the effect of waivers on student academic progress. Two groups of students who had received waivers in the Fall 1987, and Spring 1988 semesters were selected for the study. The 222 students in the first group applied and received waivers both fall and spring semesters. The 122 students in the second group used the E waivers they were granted to take classes other than English, as prerequisites for English classes. Both groups had used the waiver system to challenge class prerequisites. The research question was how well did they succeed, and how did their retention compare with the overall college retention rates.

Ninety-seven percent of the 847 waivers granted to the two groups in the study were in three categories. English was the largest with 381 (45 percent) of the waivers; followed by mathematics, 238 (28 percent), and American Language, 210 (25 percent). These waivers represent 24 percent of the total waivers granted both semesters. In Fall 1987, 2153 waivers were given and 1450 were granted in the Spring 1988 semester.

GROUP I
TWO SEMESTER WAIVER STUDENTS
FALL 1987

At the end of the Fall 1987 semester, sixty-seven percent of the classes attempted by the 222 students in this group were successfully completed with a "C" grade or higher. An additional eight classes (three percent) were completed for credit. Twenty-two percent withdrew from the class they received the waiver for. Overall college fall class retention from first census to final grade count was 70.7 percent. This overall percent however, included final grades of D, F, and incomplete. For Fall 1987 semester, incompletes were one percent of the college overall rate. The "D" and "F" grades were both seven percent each. This brings the overall rate of successful class completion with a "C" or above to 56.6 percent.

Seventy-one Group I students (32 percent) used waivers for two or more classes. Seventy-seven (77) percent of the classes were completed by these students with a "C" grade or higher. An additional six classes (four percent) were completed for credit.

Twenty-one students (nine percent) did not use their waivers but remained at the college. Two students (.009 percent) withdrew from all classes. Twenty-nine percent of the students who attempted math classes successfully completed them with a "C" grade or higher. Overall college retention for mathematics was 63 percent. This rate included the "D", "F", and incomplete grades. In the Fall semester, 15 percent received "D" grades and 12 percent received "F's". This brought the rate of math completion at "C" or above to 36 percent.

GROUP I
SPRING 1988

At the end of the Spring 1988 semester, the success rate dropped for Group I students to 59 percent successful course completion with a "C" grade or above.

An additional 4 classes (one percent) were completed for credit. Eighty-seven (32 percent) withdrew from the class they received the waiver for. Overall college retention rate also dropped to 67.8 percent from first census to final grade count. This overall percent however, included final grades of "D", "F", and incomplete. For Spring 1988 semester, incompletes were one percent of the college overall rate, "D" grades were seven percent, and "F" grades were five percent. This brought the overall college rate of successful class completion with a "C" or above to 55.7 percent.

Thirty-seven (17 percent) of Group I students used waivers for two or more classes. Eighty-two percent of the classes were completed with a "C" grade or higher. One additional class was completed for credit.

Seven students (three percent) who received second waivers did not register. Twelve (five percent) did not use their waivers, but remained at MSAC. Fifteen (seven percent) withdrew from all classes and one withdrew from the college.

Again, the highest number of withdrawals were from math classes. Thirty-two percent Group I students who attempted math classes in the spring successfully completed them with a "C" grade or higher. Overall retention for Spring semester in mathematics was 60 percent. This rate included 16 percent "D's", and ten percent "F's". This brought the rate of math completion at "C" grade or higher to 34 percent.

FURTHER ANALYSIS OF MATH WAIVERS

The withdrawal of Group I students from math was spread over 11 different classes. The greatest number both semesters, 26 percent in the Fall, and 20 percent in the Spring, were from Math D-Intermediate Algebra. Male withdrawers out numbered females both semesters, 67 percent in the Fall, and 69 percent in the Spring.

This pattern remained for the 26 students (12 percent) of Group I who withdrew both semesters from the class they received a waiver for. Again, the highest number of withdrawals (62 percent) were from math classes, and the highest number both semesters, 26 percent in the Fall, and 19 percent in the Spring were from Math D.

GROUP II
STUDENTS WHO USED E WAIVERS AS ENGLISH PREREQUISITES

Before the Z waiver was developed, 122 students used the E waivers they were granted to get into classes other than English as prerequisites for English classes. Both semesters, 68 percent of these students successfully completed the English classes they took with a "C" grade or better. The overall retention rate for the English Department was 71.6 percent for Fall 1987 and 64.7 percent for Spring 1988. This overall retention rate included Fall students with nine percent "D", and "F" grades and one percent incompletes. This brought the English Department overall fall rate of successful class completion, "C" grade or higher, to 52.6 percent. In the spring, its adjusted rate for successful completion, "C" or higher, was 48.7 percent.

Transcript analysis of the unsuccessful students in this group showed a clear pattern both semesters of current and previous semester class withdrawal, low grades, academic probation and dismissal. Eighty-three percent of the unsuccessful students in the fall, and 69 percent of the spring students were in this category. Seventy-four percent of the fall, unsuccessful students in group II were male, and 56 percent of the spring students were male. The average GPA for fall was 1.30, and for spring, 1.96.

The results of this study clearly estabish waivers as an integral part of the matriculation process. The academic success of both study Group I, and II, show the importance of maintaining a system for students to apply if they feel they are qualified for waivers. A system is being developed by MSAC computer services that will enable research to track the progress of all waiver students. This is essential to the development of success criteria to assist students and those granting the waivers. From this study, the leading indicators of a student's ability to achieve success after being granted a waiver were previous GPA, withdrawal, and course completion patterns.

MAIN CATEGORIES OF WAIVERS GRANTED FALL 1987, SPRING 1988

WAIVERS GRANTED TO GROUP I AND GROUP II STUDENTS IN THIS STUDY

CATEGORY	NUMBER	PERCENT
AMERICAN LANGUAGE (AMLA)	210	25
CHEMISTRY	12	1%
ENGLISH	381	45%
MATHEMATICS OF ELECTRONICS	6	.007%
MATHEMATICS	238	28%
	847	

WAIVER CODES REPRESENTING CLASS COMPLETION GRANTED TO GROUP I, GROUP II STUDENTS FOR FALL 1987, SPRING 1988

TYPE NUMBER		
M-25	Math D - Intermediate Algebra	32
M-23	Four semesters of High School Algebra	7
M-20	Math 51 - Elementary Algebra	41
M-19	Mathematics of Electronics 71A, or 65A or Industrial Studies 70A	1
M-18	Fundamental Math 50 or 55, or Mathmatics for Health Occupations	31
M-17	Business Mathematics 68	6
M-16	Assessment Testing	7
G-25	One semester high school trigonometry or Math C	20
G-20	Plane Geometry 52 or two semesters high school geometry	32
G-19	Two semesters high school algebra with "B" grade or three semesters high school algebra	27
M-29	Calculus and Analytic Geometry 33A	7
M-28	Math 1-C or Math 1	15
M-26	Math C - Trigonometry	1
H-28	Two semesters high school pre-calculus	1
H-20	Math of Electronics 71B or 65B, or Technical Descriptive Geometry 70, or Agricultural Calculations 91, or two semesters of high school algebra with "C" grade	5
C-10	Fundamentals of Chemistry 2A or Chem 1A or one year high school algebra and one year chemistry	12
B-02	Accounting Math 11, or Elementary Statistics 13 or Finite Math 16 or Math Analysis 15 or Intermediate Algebra D or College Algebra 1 or College Algebra and Analytical Trigonometry 1-C	11

TYPE		NUMBER
E-35	Freshman Composition 1A	3
E-34	English, Writing 68	83
E-31	Business English 5	12
E-30	English, Reading 67	283
R-05	American Language Placement Test	2
R-06	American Lanuage Reading 51	4
R-07	American Language Reading 54	74
S-05	American Language Placement Test	3
S-06	American Language Speaking 50	5
S-07	American Language Speaking 53	73
W-05	American Language Placement Test	2
W-06	American Language Writing 52	5
W-07	American Language Writing 55	42
		847

GROUP I

FALL 1987
PROGRESS OF 222 STUDENTS
WHO RECEIVED WAIVERS

At the end of the Fall 1987 semester, 67 percent of the classes attempted by these students was successfully completed with a "C" grade or higher. An additional eight classes (three percent) were completed for credit. Seventy-one (32 percent) of the students used waivers for two or more classes. Twenty-one students (nine percent) did not use the waivers but remained at MSAC. Two students (.009 percent) withdrew from all classes.

Class Completion

Grade	Number of Grades	Percent
A	59	21%
B	49	18%
C	70	25%
D	21	8%
F	8	3%
CR	8	3%
W	61	22%
I	1	.004%
	277	

No class(s) attempted by students who received waivers

	Number of Students	Percent
Did not use waiver but remained at MSAC	21	9%

Ethnicity	Female	%	Male	%	Total	%
Amer. Indian	0		2	1%	2	.009%
Asian	23	27%	26	19%	49	22%
Black	9	11%	8	6%	17	8%
Hispanic	18	21%	30	22%	48	22%
M. Eastern	6	7%	19	14%	25	11%
White	27	32%	53	38%	80	36%
Other	1	1%	0	0	1	.005%
	84	38%	138	62%	222	

GROUP I

FALL 1987
SUCCESSFUL CLASS COMPLETION SUMMARY

Class	Number of Waivers	W	Grade F	Grade D	Grade I	% Successful Completion C and Above
Admin. of Justice	9			2		78%
Aeronautics	1			1		0%
Agriculture	15			1		93%
Amer. Lang. (AmLa)	14		1, 2			79%
Anatomy	1					100%
Architectural Tech.	2		1		1	0%
Art	1					100%
Astronomy	3	1		1		33%
Biology	1			1		100%
Business	24	9	1, 3			46%
Chemistry	5	3		1		20%
Child Development	4		1			75%
Chinese	2					100%
Computer Info. Sys.	10			1		90%
Drafting	5	2				60%
Electronics	3					100%
English	14	3		1		71%
Fashion	1					100%
Fire Technology	14					100%
Guidance	1	1				0%
German	1					100%
Home Ec. Nutrition	1			1		0%
History	8		1, 1			75%
Italian	4					100%

FALL 1987

Class	Number of Waivers	W	Grade F, D, I	% Successful Completion C and Above
Machine Tool Tech.	19		1	95%
Mathmatics	63	42	2, 1	29%
Medical Terminology	1			100%
Mental Health Tech.	1			100%
Metallurgy	2			100%
Microbiology	1			100%
Music	1			100%
Oceanography	1			100%
Photography	1			100%
Political Science	6		2	67%
Physics	4	1		75%
Psychology	4		1	75%
Quality Assurance	6			100%
Respiratory Therapy	3			100%
Spanish	4			100%
Sociology	8			100%
Speech	1			100%
Supervision	6			100%
Transportation	1	—	— — —	100%
Total	277	62	8 21 1	177

Grade C and above plus 8 students who rec'd credit

FALL 1987

COMPLETION RECORD OF STUDENTS WHO USED WAIVERS FOR TWO OR MORE CLASSES

In the Fall 1987 semester, seventy-one (32 percent) of the two semester waiver students attempted two or more classes using their waivers. Seventy-seven (77 percent) of the classes were completed by these students with a "C" grade or higher. An additional six classes (four percent) were completed for credit.

GRADES		PERCENT
A	36	25%
B	38	27%
C	36	25%
D	13	9%
F	2	1%
CR	6	4%
W	12	8%
	143	

GROUP 1

SPRING 1988
PROGRESS OF 222 STUDENTS
RECEIVING SECOND WAIVERS

Fifty-nine percent of the classes attempted by these students were successfully completed with a "C" grade or higher. An additional four classes (one percent) were completed for credit. Thirty-seven (17 percent) of the students used waivers for two or more classes. Seven students (three percent) who received second waivers, did not register for the spring semester. Twelve students (5 percent) did not use their waivers, but remained at MSAC. Fifteen (7 percent) students withdrew from all classes and one (.005 percent) withdrew from the college.

CLASS COMPLETION COMPARISON

Grade	Number of Grades/Credit/W	Percent
A	49	18%
B	51	18%
C	59	23%
D	14	5%
F	11	3%
CR	4	1%
Withdrew from class(es) received waiver for	87	32%
Incomplete	1	.003%
	276	

GROUP I
SPRING 1988
SUCCESSFUL CLASS COMPLETION SUMMARY

Classes	Number of Waivers	W	Grade F	D	I	% Successful Completion C or better
Admin of Justice	1		1			0%
Aeronautics	2					100%
Agriculture	13	1	1, 1			77%
Amer. Lang. (AmLa)	15	3	2, 3			45%
Anatomy	1					100%
Arch. Technology	1				1	0%
Art	2					100%
Anthropology	1					100%
Biology	5	3				40%
Business	26	7	1			69%
Chemistry	12	3				67%
Child Development	5					100%
Chinese	1	1				0%
Comp. Inf. Sys.	5	2	1, 1			20%
Drafting	3	1				67%
Drama	1		1			0%
Electronics	2	1				50%
Engineering Tech.	1					100%
English	29	10	2, 1			55%
Fashion	2					100%
Fire Technology	2					100%
French	1					100%
Geography	1					100%
Guidance	1					100%

17

SPRING 1988

Classes	Number of Waivers	W	Grade F	D	I	% Successful Completion C or better
History	4	1	1,	1		25%
Home Ec Nutrition	2	1				50%
Humanitites	1					100%
Interior Design	1					100%
Italian	5	1				80%
Learn	1	1				0%
Literature	1	1				0%
Machine Tool Tech.	11					100%
Mathematics	60	35	5,	1		32%
Medical Terminology	2	1				50%
Mental Health Tech.	1					100%
Music	1					100%
Political Science	3	1				67%
Physics	5	5				0%
Psychology	12		1,	1		83%
Quality Assurance	15					100%
Real Estate	1	1				0%
Respiratory Therapy	12	6		1		42%
Spanish	2	1				50%
Sociology	5					100%
Speech	1					100%
Supervision	6					100%
Transportation	1	—	—	—	—	100%
	276	87	11	14	1	159 C or better

SPRING 1988
COMPLETION RECORD
OF STUDENTS WHO USED
WAIVERS FOR TWO OR MORE CLASSES

In the Spring 1988 semester, thirty-seven (17 percent) of the two semester waiver students attempted two or more classes using their waivers. Eighty-two percent of the classes were completed by these students with a "C" grade or higher. One additional class was completed for credit.

GRADES		PERCENT
A	25	28%
B	22	25%
C	26	29%
D	4	4%
F	1	1%
CR	1	1%
W	10	11%
	89	

GROUP I
SUMMARY OF MATHEMATICS WAIVERS AND STUDENT WITHDRAWALS

CLASSES	FALL 1987 W	FALL 1987 %	SPRING 1988 W	SPRING 1988 %
MATH 1 College Algebra	3	7%	7	20%
MATH 1-C College Algebra and Analytical Trig.	3	7%	1	2%
MATH 13 Elem. Statistics	1	2%	3	9%
MATH 15 Math Analysis	6	14%	3	9%
MATH 33A Calculus and Analytic Geometry	9	21%	3	9%
MATH 33B Calculus and Analytic Geometry		0%	2	6%
MATH 50 Fundamental Math	1	2%	5	14%
MATH 51 Elem. Algebra	3	7%	1	2%
MATH 52 Plane Geometry	1	2%	0	0%
MATH C Trigonometry	4	10%	3	9%
MATH D Intermediate Algebra	11	26%	7	20%
	42		35	

	FALL 1987 W	FALL 1987 %	SPRING 1988 W	SPRING 1988 %
FEMALE	14	33%	11	31%
MALE	28	67%	24	69%

GROUP I
TWO SEMESTER WAIVER
STUDENTS WHO WITHDREW
FROM CLASSES BOTH SEMESTERS

Twenty-six students (12 percent) of the 222 students who received waivers both Fall 1987, and Spring 1988, withdrew both semesters from the classes for which they received waivers. The highest number of withdrawals occurred both semesters in math classes. Although the withdrawals were from twelve different math classes, the highest number both semester, eleven (26 percent) in the fall, and seven (19 percent) in the spring, were from Math D, Intermediate Algebra.

COURSES	FALL 1987		SPRING 1988	
	NUMBER OF CLASSES	PERCENT WITHDRAWAL	NUMBER OF CLASSES	PERCENT WITHDRAWAL
AMLA	3	4%	5	7%
BUSINESS	10	15%	8	12%
CHEMISTRY	3	4%	2	3%
ENGLISH	4	6%	9	13%
MATH	42	62%	35	53%
OTHER	6		6	9%
	68		66	

GROUP II

FALL 1987
SUCCESSFUL STUDENTS WHO USED E WAIVERS AS ENGLISH PREREQUISITES

Student Qualified For	Number Of Students	%	CLASSES COMPLETED: Eng 67	%	Eng 68	%	Eng 1A	%
No Elig. Estab.	5	10%	1	20%	3	60%	1	20%
Lern 76	2	4%			2	100%		
AmLa	24	49%	13	54%	11	46%		
English 67	13	27%			11	85%	2	15%
English 68	5	10%	—	—	—	—	5	100%
	49		14	29%	27	55%	8	16%

FEMALE 29 59%

MALE 20 41%

GRADE DISTRIBUTION	A	B	C	CR	Average GPA	2.46
	3	16	25	5		

Sixty-eight percent of the students who used their E waivers as an English prerequisite successfully completed the English class they attempted with a "C" grade or higher. Ninety-two percent of these students re-enrolled Spring 1988 semester, and 41 percent enrolled in the following summer session.

Ethnicity	Female	%	Male	%	Total	%
Asian	8	28%	4	20%	12	24%
Black	2	7%	0	0	2	4%
Hispanic	10	34%	7	35%	17	35%
M. Eastern	6	21%	5	25%	11	22%
White	3	10	4	20%	7	14%
	29	59%	20	41%	49	

GROUP II

FALL 1987
UNSUCCESSFUL STUDENTS WHO USED E WAIVERS AS ENGLISH PREREQUISITES

Student Qualified For	Number Of Students	%	CLASSES NOT COMPLETED: Eng 67	%	Eng 68	%	Eng 1A	%
No Elig. Estab.	4	17%	3	75%	1	25%		
Lern 76	2	9%	2	100%				
AmLa	7	30%	4	57%	3	43%		
English 67	4	17%			4	100%		
English 68	6	26%					6	
	23		9	39%	8	35%	6	26%

FEMALES 6 26%

MALES 17 74%

GRADE DISTRIBUTION	D	F	NC	I	W	Average GPA	1.30
	4	3	1	2	13		

Four withdrew from all classes.

Transcript analysis showed a pattern in current and previous semesters of class withdrawal, low rades, academic probation and dismissal for 19 (83 percent) of the 23 students who were unsuccessful.

Ethnicity	Female	%	Male	%	Total	%
Asian	2	33%	0	0	2	9%
Black	0	0	5	29%	5	22%
Hispanic	1	17%	5	29%	6	26%
M. Eastern	0	0	4	24%	4	17%
White	3	50%	3	18%	6	26%
	6	26%	17	74%	23	

GROUP II

SPRING 1988

SUCCESSFUL STUDENTS WHO USED E WAIVERS AS ENGLISH PREREQUISITES

Student Qualified for	Number of Students	%	CLASSES COMPLETED									
			67	%	68	%	Bus 5	%	1A	%	1B	%
No Elig. Est.	14	41%	2	14%	5	36%	1	7%	5	86%	1	7%
Lern 76	0	0										
*AmLA	15	44%	8	53%	6	40%	1	7%	1	7%		
English 67	2	6%	1	50%					1	50%		
English 68	2	6%							2	100%		
English 1A	1											
	34		11	31%	11	31%	2	6%	9	26%	2	6%

*One student who qualified for AmLA completed both English 67 and 68 in the Spring Semester.

FEMALE	22	65%
MALE	12	35%

GRADE DISTRIBUTION	A	B	C	Average GPA	2.62
	2	20	12		

Sixty-eight percent of the students who used their E waiver as an English prerequisite successfully completed the English class they attempted with a "C" grade or higher. Forty-one percent enrolled in the following summer session.

Ethnicity	Female	%	Male	%	Total	%
Asian	6	27%	1	8%	7	21%
Black	3	14%	1	8%	4	12%
Hispanic	7	32%	2	17%	9	26%
M. Eastern	1	5%	3	25%	4	12%
White	5	23%	5	42%	10	29%
	22	65%	12	35%	34	

GROUP II

SPRING 1988

UNSUCCESSFUL STUDENTS WHO USED E WAIVERS AS ENGLISH PREREQUISITES

Student Qualified for	Number of Students	%	CLASSES NOT COMPLETED 67	%	68	%	Bus 5	%	1A	%
No Elig. Est.	11	69%	1	9%	7	64%	1	9%	2	18%
LERN 76	0									
AmLA	2	13%	2	100%						
English 67	1	6%			1	100%				
English 68	2	13%	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
	16		3	19%	8	50%	1	6%	4	25%

FEMALES	7	44%
MALES	9	56%

GRADE DISTRIBUTION	D	F	NC	IP	W	Average GPA	1.96
	0	0	0	1	15		

Eight withdrew from all classes. Transcript analysis showed a pattern in current and previous semester of CLASS withdrawal, low grades, academic probation and dismissal for 11 (69 percent) of the 16 students.

Ethnicity	Female	%	Male	%	Total	%
Asian	2	29%	1	11%	3	19%
Black	0	0	0	0	0	0
Hispanic	1	14%	4	44%	5	31%
M. Eastern	0	0	1	11%	1	6%
White	4	57%	3	33%	7	44%
	7	44%	9	56%	16	

COUNT OF STUDENTS GRANTED DEAN WAIVERS

SEMESTER/SESSION	TOTAL
Fall 1987	2153
Spring 1988	1450
Summer I 1988	768
*Fall 1988	2300
Students receiving 2nd waiver Fall 1987 & Spring 1988	222
Students receiving 3rd waiver Fall 1987, Spring 1988 & Sum I 1988	17
*Students receiving 3rd waiver Fall 1987, Spring 1988 & Fall 1988	40
Students receiving 4th waiver Fall 1987, Spring 1988, Sum I 1988 and Fall 1988	2

*Figures include Summer II 1988

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